

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

In the Office Action, claims 11-13, 15 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hisatake, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,122,024).

Claim 14 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicant has amended claim 11 to incorporate the features of claim 14 and canceled claim 14 without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 11-13 and 15-16 are pending for further consideration.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 11-13, 15 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hisatake, et al. Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of independent claim 11 becomes moot by incorporating the features of claim 14, which has been indicated as including allowable subject matter, into claim 11. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 11, as newly-amended, is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is thus respectfully requested.

Claims 12, 13, 15 and 16 are also in condition for allowance at least because of their dependencies on claim 11 as well as the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter.

With no other rejection pending, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 11-13 and 15-16 are in condition for allowance.

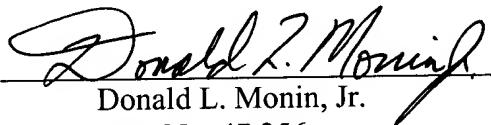
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of the response, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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